

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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NND 96 9042
By *fst* Date *2 June '98*

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Department of State
TELEGRAM

POL Nigeria-US
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ACTION: Amembassy LAGOS
INFO: Amembassy Abidjan
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SUBJECT: Ambassador Iyalla's Meeting with the Secretary

on Admission to U.S. of C.C. Mojekwu

1. The Secretary on April 6 received Ambassador Iyalla who returned from Lagos with instructions from General Gowon to seek an appointment to protest our granting of a visa to C.C. Mojekwu.
2. Ambassador opened discussion by noting pleasure of General Gowon over present good relationships between U.S. and Nigeria. He expressed personal appreciation of General Gowon for MAP training in engineering and technical fields which the General considered would be a key factor in enhancing Nigerian Army usefulness in civil work projects for post-war development. Iyalla said General Gowon was also most grateful for the \$15 million AID reconstruction loan, especially for the promptness of the offer which he believed had significantly influenced the World Bank to propose its \$80 million program loan.

(5)

DRAFTED BY: AF/NI:JWFoley Jr.:dal	DRAFTING DATE 4-8-71	TEL. EXT. 23468	APPROVED BY: S/S - Mr. Eliot
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CLEARANCES:

AF - Mr. Carter
SCA - Miss Watson
S - Mr. Johnson

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3. In light this revived cordial atmosphere General Gowon, according to Ambassador Iyalla, was bewildered by our willingness to admit Mojekwu. He therefore asked the Ambassador to raise subject with the Secretary whom General Gowon felt had had a major hand in the rapid improvement in U.S./Nigerian relations over the last year. Message General Gowon wanted to get across was that our decision on Mojekwu had placed him in a difficult position within FMG. The General had put his name and prestige on the line in asking through previous representations that the visa not be approved. His position vis-a-vis anti-American elements within Nigeria had now been weakened and it would be harder for him to counsel moderation as he had in the past when future bilateral issues arise with the U.S.

4. In registering other concerns of General Gowon regarding Mojekwu's admission, Ambassador Iyalla reiterated points

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E.O. 12958, as amended

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he had made on earlier occasions to AF. He maintained that Mojekwu's presence could become a major problem in our relations since the latter is a chronic troublemaker who likely both to incite Nigerian students in U.S. against FMG and to cooperate with residual elements of former Biafra lobby. Iyalla asserted that Mojekwu would serve as vehicle for collecting funds here and claimed to have evidence latter visited Ojukwu in February at which time Mojekwu turned over \$1 million for Ojukwu's continuing clandestine efforts against FMG.

5. The Secretary in response asked Ambassador Iyalla to thank General Gowon for his expressions of appreciation and to inform him that the Secretary too was pleased with the progress in the improvement of relations between the two governments. The Secretary therefore hoped this one incident would not be allowed to loom large in the overall picture. He hoped the General would be able to understand

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that the decision on Mojekwu was a consular act that resulted from the application of our laws and had nothing to do with our policy toward Nigeria. The Secretary stressed the limitations of our system which do not allow discretion to keep people out when requirements of the law are fulfilled, even though politically the Executive Branch might want to exclude an individual.

6. As for possibility Mojekwu might while here undertake actions inimical to FMG, the Secretary assured that the USG would take steps to deport him if he should engage in such activities. Ambassador Iyalla was requested to bring any information he received along these lines immediately to Department's attention. However the Secretary stressed we would need concrete evidence and documentation in order support a review of Mojekwu's case by the Attorney General and that legal proceedings could not be taken merely on the basis of gossip.

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7. The Secretary further indicated that we look forward to Mojekwu's departure at end of the one year period for which his visa is valid. He also promised that any requests by Mojekwu for extension or conversion of the visa at expiry would be very carefully reviewed by USG.

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END

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